TOWN & COUNTRY CHURCH

In This Issue

The way the Sharecropper's pastor is being challenged by his people and by the changes in the life about him—and the way the pastor is receiving new guidance—is told by Theophilus D. Alexander, who works for the Division of Home Missions among and with the Sharecroppers' pastors, on Page 1.

Paul Raver, a layman of the Disciples, who administers the great Bonneville Power Administration of the Pacific Northwest, tells about the basic resources of the region considered in last year's Convocation, digested in last month's issue. Dr. Raver's manuscript came too late for the February edition. See Page 3.

An essay contest on the retired farmer—see Page 5. Bill Dreier, a farmer of Hubbard, Iowa, turned in the winning number.

An Institute on Church Music, held in Virginia, is described on Page 9 by Henry Langford, a minister of the Shockoe and County Line Baptist Churches. His address is Route 1, Chatham, Virginia.

Some months ago we told about the Salvation Army's rural program. Don Pielstick interprets it more fully on Page 12.

For a study of rural churches in Pennsylvania by William G. Mather, Pennsylvania State College, see Page 13.

A larger parish in "Little Egypt"—see Page 15.

No. 78
March, 1952

The Sharecropper's Pastor*

THEOPHILUS D. ALEXANDER

HOLBROOK LIBRARY PACIFIC SCHOOL OF RELIGION

• The sharecropper's pastor is at the crossroads in changing rural America. He could continue his restricted services and become one of the most hopeless and forgotten persons of this Twentieth Century. Or he could untiringly devote his services to this new day and recapture his coveted position as one of the most resourceful and revered leaders of humble people of the countryside.

The Problem

Let us visualize, in the first place, the sharecropper's pastor who is a part of the problem of poor living, poor health, poor housing and poor farming rather than a part of the answer. The sharecropper's pastor is inadequately trained for progressive leadership in changing rural America.

Moreover, the sharecropper's pastor seems not to be too much disturbed about his lack of preparation. For example, an elderly sharecropper's wife said to her pastor, "Reverend Mitchell, why don't you go to school? Don't you know people are talking about your broken English?" The minister unconcernedly replied, "Sister, I don't need to go to school to learn how to preach. I just opens my mouth and the good Lord fills it with something to say." The sharecropper's wife retorted, "Maybe the good Lord does fill your mouth with something to say but you need to go to school to learn how to spit it out."

Above all, the sharecropper's pastor makes the ministry a sideline. He preaches on Sunday and is engaged the other days of the week in work such as farming, teaching school, mining, selling insurance, barbering and sawmilling. Consequently, as someone has said, "He is invisible six days of the week and incomprehensible on the Sabbath."

Home Missions

You may well ask, "What is being done on the part of home missions to help the sharecropper's pastor?" The answer is that he is often being stimulated to come to grips with his problem. As he attends institutes, extension classes and rural-leadership courses in theological seminaries and state colleges, as he observes field and laboratory demonstrations under the direction of home mission workers, the veil of ignorance and superstition is lifted from his eyes.

Many feel that they cannot adequately serve the people unless by living with them, working with them, and sharing with them. In the language of the prophet Ezekiel, the sharecropper's pastor is being challenged to see that if he would help his people have better living in changing rural America, he must sit where they sit.

New Methods

Moreover, the sharecropper's pastor is increasingly being challenged to interpret religion in terms of daily living. He is being challenged to make the church's program relevant to present-day needs. He is being challenged to be a vital force in his community. He is being challenged to work with social agencies that are designed to improve rural life. He is being challenged to serve the whole person in his whole environment.

In addition, the sharecropper's pastor, under the guidance and direction of home missions workers, is increasingly responding to new methods and new ideas. He is helping his people buy land and build homes. He is helping them modernize and beautify their homes. He is helping them impove their farms. He is help-

* From an address before the Annual Assembly of the Division of Home Missions, National Council of Churches, at Buck Hill Falls, Pa., December 10, 1951.

ing them have better health, better recreation and better living.

The task of home missions to the sharecropper and his pastor is unfinished. Revolutionary changes in the agricultural South have created wider areas for expansion as well as a more intensive need for continued services.

And the sharecropper's pastor—if he would lead the sharecropper out of the wilderness of poor living, poor housing, poor schooling, poor health, poor farming, poor community life, poor recreation, poor landlord-tenant relations, poor interracial relations, and poor everything else, except a lot of children—must receive adequate education for his mission and be consecrated, motivated and inspired to the thought, action and service of this new day.

This is increasingly being done through the services of home missions.

North Pomfret Congregational Church, North Pomfret, Vermont

One Great Hour of Sharing

• The purpose of the 1952 united appeal for relief and reconstruction, "One Great Hour of Sharing," is to raise funds for refugee and relief needs, for interchurch aid and other related types of service. The chief areas to be covered by the appeal are Korea, India, Palestine, and the refugee situation in central Europe.

The official sponsor of the united appeal is the Central Department of Church World Service of the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the U. S. A., 120 East 23rd Street, New York 10, N. Y.

The united appeal will come to a climax during the week of March 16-23, 1952. Most churches will take offerings on Sunday, March 23. Some denominations like the Methodists, and the Protestant Episcopal Church, while supporting the program of Church World Service, find it inconvenient to adapt their previously determined programs of promotion to the March 16-23 date.

Source material on the areas of need will be supplied by the "One Great Hour of Sharing" office, Church World Service, 120 East 23rd Street, New York 10, N. Y.

Lord's Acre Movement

• The Lord's Acre Movement has steadily progressed over two decades. It has spread widely through the United States, in Canada and on mission fields.

In Biblical times the practice of dedicating the first fruits of the fields and the firstlings of the flocks and herds to God was a basic means of working with God for the support of the religious institutions of Israel.

The Lord's Acre plan, as adapted from the Biblical practice, is likewise a basic means of working with God for the maintenance and upbuilding of the Church today.

How to Use It

The Lord's Acre plan should be presented to the church with enthusiasm and conviction, usually as a supplementary form of stewardship. Early planning is most important, with appealing objectives such as church property improvement, pastor's visiting expense and a missionary project.

All salable field and stock projects are recommended. These may be worked as individual projects or as family or church group projects. Wage earners should be asked to join in the program by dedicating the first hour's wage each week.

Making enterprising use of available markets is the general procedure. There is often real opportunity to establish sales relations with members of adjoining town and city churches.

The Lord's Acre Harvest Sale has been found exceedingly helpful in many, many churches. This should be carried out only with wise planning and effective advertising.

Serves Many Purposes

The Lord's Acre plan offers opportunities and provides training for stewardship. It strengthens fellowship. It helps to integrate religion with life-occupation. It brings spirituality into daily life. It is a means to better farming and community cooperation. The Lord's Acre plan can also serve evangelistic and missionary causes. And it greatly aids church financing.

The Lord's Acre Movement is one of the projects of the Religious Department of the Farmers Federation, Asheville, North Carolina, of which the Reverend Dumont Clarke is director. Dr. Clarke will be glad to furnish further information on ways and means of conducting this plan for the benefit of your church.

Developments in the Pacific Northwest*

PAUL RAVER

One of the great resources we have to work with and talk about in the northwest is water. I think sometimes we who live out here fail to appreciate our water, particularly along the west coast. We get sort of tired of the rainy season, but the fact is that the northwest not only has rich land, enriched with the ashes of the great volcanos, but it has a water supply that is unique in this entire nation.

It is the uniqueness of this great water resource that makes it possible to do a type of planning on a large scale for basic development work to provide new opportunities for new people to make a livelihood in this region.

Basic Resources

Because of the uniqueness of this entire water system here, the northwest will inevitably become one of the greatest regions in this nation with the ability to support a growing population with a continually rising standard of living.

Aside from this great water resource, we have other interesting geographical characteristics in this region. The western slope of the Rockies is covered with a great forest. Between the Rockies and the Cascades is an area of very rich but dry soil requiring only irrigation to develop it into profitable farm lands.

On the other side of these upland plains are the Cascades. West of the Cascades is an area of high rainfall and great forests.

Down in southern Oregon we have the greatest stand of Douglas fir timber remaining in these United States. We also have great stands of birch and hemlock and other good woods throughout this basin. There is also a great agricultural area here in the Willamette valley extending all the way from about Medford north to the Canadian border, between the Cascades and the coastal range.

Land and forests are among the basic resources of this region. These are and will be, for many years to come, the basic means for providing employment in this region.

Development of Resources

In this area we have today some four and a half million people. By 1970 it is estimated that we will have about seven million people. About four million of that seven million will be in the smaller communities and rural areas.

It is expected that the national trend toward a decline in farm population will be reversed in this particular region.

Now, to get some idea of how employment is going, we'll have to look at what is probably going to happen here in the development of our resources during the next twenty years. Take the Columbia basin project for one example. There it is proposed to irrigate one million acres of additional land. A good portion of the million acres has already been taken out by the Atomic Energy Plant and though we may not receive the full development, I would think there would be at least seven or eight hun-

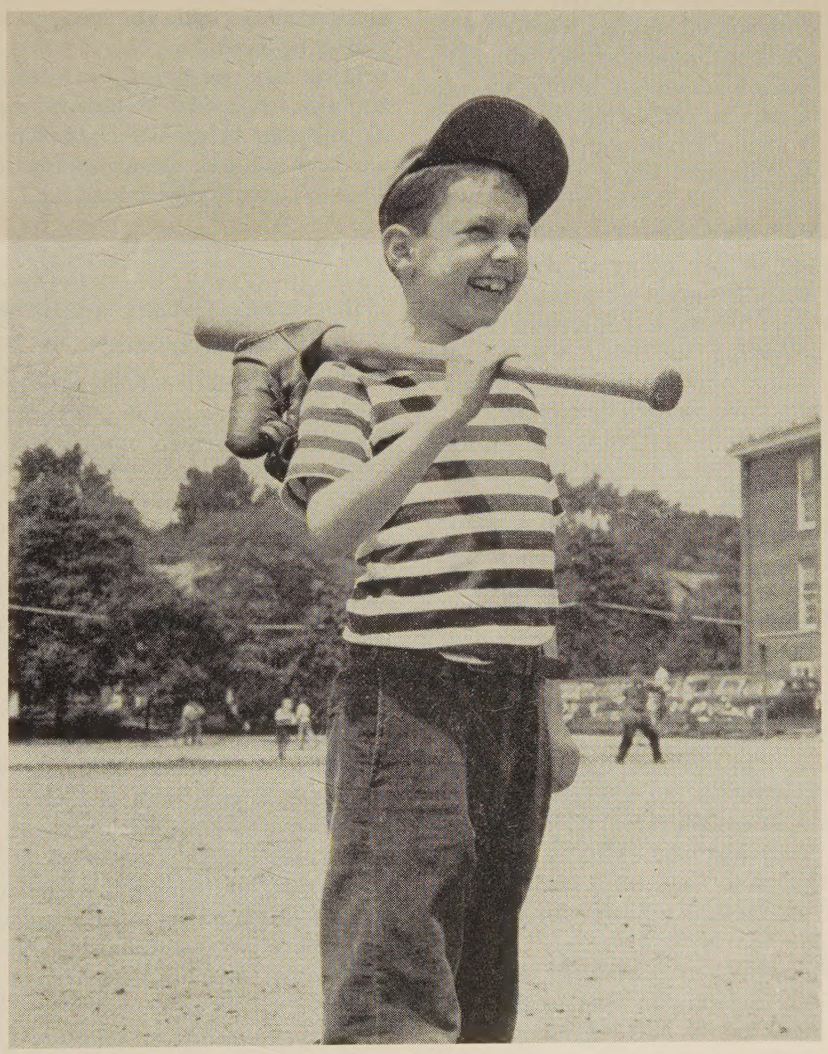

Photo by Philip Gendreau, N. Y.

* From an address at the National Convocation on the Church in Town and Country, held in Portland, Oregon, October 30-November 1, 1951.

dred thousand acres brought in during this next twenty-year period.

Agricultural Employment

We will have, out of that, about 14,000 farms. Agriculture will add about 20,000 workers in this one development. There will be about 2,000 workers added in manufactures.

There will be a certain amount of food processing, canning, refrigeration and things of that kind to go along with the farm development. You will have a permanent addition of about 2,000 employees in the building and construction field. There will always be buildings to be built and homes to be built, and so on.

Once you get a program of that kind going, about 10,000 people will be employed in the retail and wholesale trades that will grow in the various communities. Personal, business and professional services will add another 16,000 employees, so you will have employment of about 60,000 people on that one irrigation project, which means livelihood for perhaps 150,000 people.

Research and Planning

What we are doing in the northwest with this great water resource is making a dynamic capitalism work by providing the basic tools with which new opportunities, new developments, new wealth is created.

Are we going to have a continuation of the development of slums, a concentration of great industries in great cities, or are we going to see a decentralization of industry, a balancing of this great agricultural section with new industries throughout the region? We have an opportunity of doing the latter. It will require research and it will require planning.

Kilowatts and kilowatt hours are technical things and they are sometimes hard to appraise, to understand. The Columbia River system will provide somewhere between thirty and forty million kilowatts of firm hydroelectric power for this region.

We have the opportunity of keeping our capitalistic system growing and dynamic in this region, providing continually new opportunities for new industries for new people and new jobs. All we have to do is harness this great river system and do it in a manner that will bring the maximum benefit from all the purposes the river affords.

The Challenge

This last year the Bonneville Power Administration collected $36,200,000 in gross revenues from the sale of power. Out of it we paid all operating expenses, interest on the investment, as well as amortization, and we had $14,500,000 left over. We have collected $225,000,000 during the past twelve years of our operation but during the first part of that period, for several years, we weren't collecting anything.

The challenge to you is how we can not only help revitalize these crossroad communities throughout this region, but how we can help revitalize them with the proper kind of a church plan.

How can you bring the influence and the impact of your thinking as planners to bring the right kind of a church plan to these communities? That is a real challenge.

Rockefeller Grant for Rural Church Study

• The Rockefeller Foundation has awarded a grant to the University of Missouri to finance a four-year scientific study of the rural church as a social institution in Missouri, to be conducted by the University's department of rural sociology.

President Frederick A. Middlebush has announced that the study is to be made under the supervision of Dr. C. E. Lively, chairman of the department of rural sociology and Director of the University's Institute for Research in the Social Sciences, who will serve as chairman of a technical committee to conduct the work on the project.

Dr. Middlebush said the Bible College of Missouri is cooperating with the University on the project, and that Dean Seth W. Slaughter of the College will serve as chairman of an advisory committee composed of church officials and interested laymen. Although the Bible College of Missouri is not actually a part of the University, the two institutions cooperate closely in their educational activities, and accept interchange of credits toward degrees.

Dr. Lively said that Dr. Lawrence M. Hepple, associate professor of rural sociology at the University, will be the active leader of operations of the technical committee. Other members of the committee are Cecil L. Gregory, instructor in rural sociology at the University, and Vladimir E. Hartman, head of the department of the rural church at the Bible College. Other personnel for the project will be employed.

The entire project will be administered through the Agricultural Experiment Station in the University's Division of Agricultural Sciences under the Dean and Director, Dr. John H. Longwell.

In discussing the proposed project, Dr. Lively said that recent years have brought tremendous changes in the economic and social conditions of the rural population, particularly in the middle west, and that the study will attempt to evaluate the effect of these changes in relation to the place of the church and its effect upon community life.

Southeastern Convocation

• One of the most significant trends highlighted by the Southeastern Convocation of Churches held late in 1951, is the rapidly growing trend toward church cooperation in the South.

The three-day meeting drew some 800 delegates from churches and councils of churches in ten Southern states, as well as a score of top national church leaders.

Sponsored by the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the U. S. A., the Convocation was arranged by the National Council's Southeastern office, of which the Reverend Ernest Arnold is executive director.

Among the actions taken at the Convocation was the setting up of a committee to organize a state council of churches in Georgia.

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The Retired Farmer*

BILL DREIER

HOLBROOK LIBRARY PACIFIC SCHOOL OF RELIGION

• The prosperity on the farm during the past ten years has enabled many a farmer to retire to what he thought was to be a life of complete satisfaction. But to most of these retired farmers retirement has been a complete disillusionment.

Why is this so? If we look deeply enough, we find that the typical retired farmer spent no time in planning the mode of life he hoped to live in retirement. He retired from something and not to something.

Problems

I met a neighbor on the streets of a nearby town to which he had retired a few weeks before. He was one who had worked from sunrise to sunset. He had longed for retirement to get away from this terrible grind. "Well," I asked, "how goes it, this retired business?" He gave me a pathetic and crooked smile and replied, "Bill, this retiring to town was the most terrible mistake I ever made in my life."

A few weeks later I saw him digging ditches for a sewer on the edge of his town. He had hoped for so much in retirement, and now to keep from going nuts he had come to this!

Another farmer built himself a beautiful home in a nearby village. I talked to him after he had lived in his new home for six months. "Nothing to this retired business. Nothing to do in town. Who wants to stand on the streets all day? No, the farm is the best place in the world." And thus he summed up the problem of retirement as he saw it.

Another farmer retired. He had made enough money so that he could have lived in complete relaxation. He had been a very successful Sunday school teacher. He loves young folks and understands them and their problems. One day I suggested to our pastor: "There is a man you should use as your assistant pastor." But for some reason the pastor didn't see how he could use this man. After being retired for a year, he started driving out to his farms and puttered around there long enough to tire his body so that he could sleep at night.

Now, we ask, how can this problem of retirement for the farmer be met? How can those last years of a farmer's life be enriched that they will have real meaning? We all know that if we want to get a view of the surrounding country we do not stop at the base of the mountain. No, we climb to the top, and what a wonderful vista one can have from there. If he has been trained to see things, the last of life can be the finest. The last years can give meaning to all the years that have gone before.

Stimulus

Sometime ago I attended a farm institute in Colorado. I began talking to an oldish farmer sitting next to me. He seemed wide awake and interested. We began to compare notes. Having just retired, I asked him what his interests were in retirement. "My interest in retirement is my grandchildren." Shortly after this remark the program began. A 4-H youth was introduced as the champion Herford club boy in the state. The old gentleman at my side could contain himself no longer. Leaning toward me he whispered, "That's my grandson."

I was talking to another town-dwelling retired farmer. We talked about activity for retired folks. He spoke up. "Politics is my hobby." And it was too. I know the interest he was taking in getting able men to run for office in his county. There is a man who really has a job that brings him a lot of satisfaction and also a hobby that is doing a lot of

* Last spring Shirley E. Greene, Agricultural Relations Secretary of the Council for Social Action, Congregational Christian Churches, proposed an essay contest on the problems of retirement for farmers. Bill Dreier, a farmer of Hubbard, Iowa, turned in the only essay, and a good one. So he won the prize—a year's subscription to *Social Action,* magazine. The essay is given above.

good for his whole county. At a recent Farm Bureau meeting the question was asked: "Who is the most influential man in the county in the ———— party?" Someone immediately mentioned this man.

Another retired farmer when asked: "What is your hobby?" replied, "Why, it's a pencil." I thought that was a queer hobby. When we had a hobby show for folks past fifty this farmer had his exhibit there. He used his pencil in writing articles. He exhibited articles that he had written for various papers and practically all those articles dealt with problems that other folks should be thinking about. There, I thought, was a hobby that could occupy the retired farmer through the years and render a real service to his community.

New Adventure

So the problem looks from here. A lot of farmers retire *from* something and find themselves in a stagnant pool. They desperately need help. They need someone to show them how they can retire *to* something. What are a few of the things a retired farmer could give time to? Every little town needs somone who has the time to plan for city beautification, removal of trash which is so often evident on the outskirts of towns, removal of unsightly outhouses that manage to cling on landscapes long after their usefulness has passed. What fun a retired person could have if he caught the vision of such possibilities. Each passing year could mean more and he could say with Oliver Wendell Holmes, "At eighty I see new vistas opening up all around me."

Retired farmers should take a greater interest in school problems in their county and state. The children of today will be the leaders of tomorrow. In every community leaders are needed who will take an interest in educational matters and help form policy for education.

In closing, retirement can be a great new adventure. We give the first 25 years of our lives to getting an education, the next 25 years to the accumulation of enough property to take care of the physical man. Why not, early in life determine to give the last 50 years of our lives to serving our communities in whatever capacity we especially are fitted for? Educators and ministers have a tremendous challenge before them to awaken these dormant capacities in rural people.

—From *Christian Agriculture*

Some Lenten Suggestions

• Time given to a special round of Lenten calls in all homes of the church will be well spent. If the congregation is too large for the pastor to visit all of them, then this could be a special consistory visitation. The emphasis would be on Lenten attendance and Lenten family devotions. Suitable material for this family custom could be brought to the home as well as the Lenten program for the church. Toward the end of the Lenten season, there should be an extensive display of devotional literature, so that families may be encouraged to continue to have family devotions.

—From *The Party Line* of the Evangelical and Reformed Church

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Religious Film Association

• The Religious Film Association has moved *from* 45 Astor Place, New York, *to* new quarters at 220 Fifth Avenue, New York 1, N. Y., where it will share space with the Department of Broadcasting and Films of the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the U. S. A.

The purpose of the move, according to W. L. Rogers, Executive Secretary of the Association, is to provide closer liaison between the distribution functions of the RFA and the film production functions of the Protestant Film Commission and the Protestant Radio Commission which are now merged, and for which the RFA acts as exclusive distributor.

Rural Lutherans

• On November 7-8, 1951, Luther Theological Seminary, St. Paul, Minn., sponsored a rural church conference for her student body and rural pastors of southern Minnesota. The theme of the conference was "The Rural Church and Its Community." The Rev. Oscar Engebretson, rural pastor from Decorah, Iowa, and the Rev. E. W. Mueller, Rural Church Life secretary of the National Lutheran Council, were the speakers. This is the first such rural church conference, but the seminary hopes to make it an annual event.

* * *

The pastors and laymen of Southwest North Dakota sponsored a rural life conference at Badlands Lutheran Bible Camp at Medora in September, 1951. The conference speakers, Dr. R. Schickle of North Dakota Agricultural College, Fargo, and Dr. W. E. Lillo of Concordia College, Moorhead, Minn., centered their talks on "The Church and the Family." This group of Lutherans in western North Dakota has been working for some time toward bringing a more adequate ministry to the rural people of that area. The conference was merely one way in which they are seeking to do a better task in their communities.

* * *

Immanuel Lutheran Church, an open country church near Beatrice, Neb., has called the Rev. J. A. Schiller as its pastor with the understanding that Pastor Schiller may devote more than half of his time as chaplain to the 1,800 people at the State Institution for the Feebleminded at Beatrice. The congregation is paying the pastor's entire salary. As a rural church which does not have possibilities for great numerical growth, Immanuel Church is rendering a special service to the Kingdom by its unselfish action.

* * *

Many farmers in the Central District of the American Lutheran Church are setting aside generous gifts in kind for the Home Mission Advance in the Church.

The Country Clergyman: His Visiting

HERBERT JAMES

A pastor must visit his people if he would bear the name of shepherd in any worthy or working sense. There are still some men who shirk it. They tell you it is not in their line. They make no plans for it. They let other things take up their time. Perhaps they may go to a person who is very ill, or when urgently summoned to a death-bed. But beyond this there is no recognition of it as an integral part of parochial work.

But if you are to regard your parishes as neighborhoods or as families in which you have to carry out in detail the idea of personal fatherhood or brotherhood, you must visit. The neglect of it from whatever cause has led, is leading, to very serious results.

Parish Feeds the Pulpit

Take the relation of pastoral work to the pulpit. Phillips Brooks, who is by no means inclined to underrate the influence of preaching has spoken these weighty words:

"The duty of making yourself acceptable to people, and winning by all manly ways their confidence in you, and in the truth which you tell, is one that is involved in the very fact of your being a preacher. It follows from this that the work of the pastor and preacher really belong together, and ought not to be separated. . . . The two things are not two but one. . . .

"There may be preachers here and there with such a deep, intense insight into the general humanity, that they can speak to men without knowing to whom they speak. Such preachers are very rare, and other preachers who have not their power trying to do it are sure to preach to some unreal, unhuman men of their own imagination.

"The preacher needs to be pastor that he may preach to real men. The pastor needs to be preacher that he may keep the dignity of his work alive. The preacher who is not a pastor grows remote. The pastor who is not a preacher grows petty. Never be content to let men truthfully say of you, 'He is a preacher but no pastor,' or 'He is a pastor but no preacher.' Be both: for you cannot really be the one unless you are also the other."

Yes! *the parish feeds the pulpit.* It will bring your people to hear you, as the "house-going minister makes the church-going people."

Reading Men

If your pulpit is to be a power, you must read men as well as books. You must take stock of their tastes, their habits, their ways of thinking. In proportion as pastoral work suffers, so does pulpit matter.

The precise nature of pastoral work is shepherding. But that one word includes much. All that relates to the material, moral, and spiritual interests of your people will be your care. For a true shepherding implies more than the provision of pasture. There is guarding and guiding, as well as rescuing and ruling.

Men are not saved in the mass. No wise physician contents himself with opening his medicine-chest, however well-fitted, well-arranged, and correctly labelled, and bidding his patients help themselves. Not a little is to be learnt from our Lord's tender and loving action towards the blind man whom the Jews cast out. That work in private was the winning of a soul.

Let me say here that we of the country parishes have far greater opportunity for this necessary duty than our brethren in the towns. We shall best carry it out by giving diligent heed to the visitation of the several members of a flock whether they be whole or sick.

Each class has its special claim, whether they be gentry, farmers, or laborers. If you are men of tact as well as men of heart you will be more welcome oftentimes than you suppose yourselves to be.

There is many a door which, though it will not open of its own accord, needs but a gentle push to open it. It will not seek but it may be sought.

Habits Important

Get acquainted with your people's habits as to time. Many a well-intentioned visit has failed because it was not well-timed. Consideration and courtesy are good guides here. Respect their feelings as you would have them respect yours. Be very particular in the matter of meal-times.

Fields of Westtown Friends School, Westtown, Pennsylvania

You may safely make a call when the dinner is over, but beware how you look in too frequently before it is served up.

The best time for the men is the evening when supper is over. Sometimes you can get a friendly chat in the furrow with a man at plough, or going to his pit work, or mending his nets. But the best time is, as I have said, the evening.

Then, try to get acquainted with their habits of thinking on religious subjects. Try further to acquaint yourselves with their ways of speech. Make it felt that your visits have a distinct purpose; that you want to establish a friendship, arouse an interest, manifest sympathy, with a view to reuniting a broken link, restoring a disturbed current, persuading to rightness of life.

Carry out as far as possible the law of adaptation. Become all things to all men, but keep your Master and your Master's message ever before you.

Quantity or Quality?

Visit on a system, and visit systematically. Keep if possible a register of visits, but do not hamper yourselves with the feeling that you must get through so many visits each day.

Do remember that it is not the quantity but the quality of the visits which tells. Measure your work as God measures it—by its possibilities.

Be diligent. Be diligent in realizing your responsibility to God and to your flock. Be diligent in seeking to discharge that responsibility, and that by watching for opportunities, making due preparation, drawing your reading, your observation, your experience this one way, commending yourselves to your people by truth of doctrine and truth of life, approaching them with sympathy, following them up with perseverance.

Be diligent above all things in prayer. Efforts only are yours, success is God's.

Seek the Lord and his strength, and be diligent in the seeking.

—From *The Country Clergyman and His Work,* published by Macmillan in 1890.

Migrant Families

• A report entitled *Migrant Farm Labor in Colorado—A Study of Migratory Families,* by Howard E. Thomas and Florence Taylor, is published by the National Child Labor Committee, 419 Fourth Avenue, New York 16, N. Y., at $1.25 a copy. The study was started in June, 1950, at the request of Walter W. Johnson, then Governor of Colorado. "The data presented in the report were obtained by interviewing male household heads or female homemakers in a sampling of 262 seasonal agricultural families found in the state at the time the survey was made." In the 262 families were 1,513 persons, and nearly all were "Spanish Americans." Only 15 per cent of the families studied were residents of Colorado. The workers were employed in the spring in weeding onions and blocking and thinning beets. Then they turned to harvesting the vinecrops, e.g., beans, peas, potatoes, and tomatoes.

Certain of the findings were summarized in the report as follows:

"Migrant families were large, averaging 5.7 members. Children 14 years and under constituted 44 per cent of the total group.

"They came from 11 States, nearly half from Texas. . . .

"Families migrated for seasonal farm work because of economic distress.

"For 26 per cent, this was their first season as migrants; 35 per cent had been migrants for more than 5 years, 18 per cent for more than 10 years. . . .

"Migrants secured seasonal work in Colorado through recruiting agents of the beet sugar companies, independent contractors, or the Colorado State Employment Service. A very small number came 'on their own.'

"Migrants are recruited in large numbers for spring and fall beet work but there is not enough work for them in summer crops between beet operations. Sugar beet growers and companies take no responsibility for their recruits during this slack period. . . .

"One of the most vicious aspects of the migrant problem is the completely unscrupulous practices of the independent contractor. He is responsible to no one. Civic-minded groups in the State regard him as a 'racketeer' and 'an exploiter of human misfortune.'

"Only thirty workers had contracts with farmers or contractors and only five were written contracts. . . .

"Nearly half the migrant families lived in growers' houses and most of the others in labor camps. . . .

"The migrants lived chiefly on cheap, filling and starchy foods. Diet was affected by income, inadequate cooking facilities, lack of refrigeration and insufficient time for food preparation.

"The poverty of migrants, the crowded and unsanitary conditions under which they live and their inadequate diet make serious health problems inevitable. . . .

"More than 200 children 7 to 16 years were workers on the crops. The median age of the child worker was 10½ years. . . .

"Thirty-five per cent of the children of school age (7-16) had left school or had never been in school. . . .

"Migrants belonged to practically no organizations except the church. Church members were not encouraged to participate in church services or events in Colorado.

"Discrimination against migrants was marked. It was evident in schools, commercial recreation facilities, restaurants, chruches, law enforcement, and retail food stores which raised their prices for migrants."

Minnesota Methodists

• The Methodists of Minnesota are conducting a Centennial campaign to raise money for Methodist church extension. $1,060,000 has already been rasied, of which about one-half will be used in a revolving fund for the extension of Methodist work in the rebuilding of churches in rural areas.

ACLA Annual Meeting

• The American Country Life Association held its annual meeting at the University of Illinois in October of 1951. Representation from rural life related agencies was the broadest in many years. From the standpoint of attendance, breadth of representation, interest, audience participation and development of conclusions, the 1951 conference was most outstanding.

Program

In the spirit of common interest and fellowship, the conference opened with the Monday evening Kaffee Klatch. Tuesday morning Dr. Morgenthau's analysis of the world situation and its impact upon today's life set a pattern for clear analysis. Father O'Rourke gave significance to America's farm family system of agriculture. Pastor Mueller urged emphasis upon human rather than upon money values.

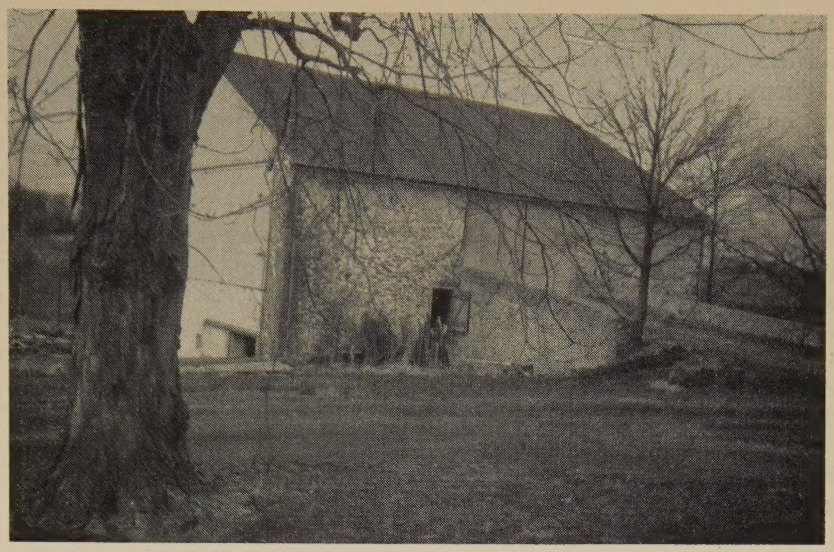
Youth, speaking through Dianne Mathre and Ervin Martin urged that youth and adults work together as they face the pressures of today. Some of the recommendations made were for a "stronger sense of home and citzenship responsibility," "teachings at the home dinner table," and "appreciation of the library as a constructive ally for rural America."

Farm policy problems were discussed at length. Among the speakers, presenting these problems and solutions for them, were Carl Taylor of the U. S. D. A., and Roger Fleming.

Honorary Award

The ACLA's Scroll of Recognition went to Miss Mabel Carney, daughter of rural Illinois. Miss Carney pioneered improved rural teacher training in the middle west, founded the Department of Rural Education at Columbia University and worked for educational opportunities for Negroes. Educational institutions throughout America joined in ACLA's recognition service.

Mrs. Haven Smith, Nebraska Farm Bureau, Chappell, Nebraska, was elected President of the ACLA for 1951-52.



Fields of Westtown Friends School, Westtown, Pennsylvania

Rural Institute on Church Music and Worship

HENRY LANGFORD

• One of the most valued ministries that ever came to the rural communities of Virginia was the institute of Church Music and Worship, held recently in the Spring Garden Presbyterian Church in Pittsylvania County.

I understand that this is the first institute ever held in any rural section of Virginia. It showed that small country churches may, by correct planning and diligent study, have a church service that is just as worshipful and impressive as that held in any large city church.

Cooperative Planning

Methodist, Episcopal, Presbyterian, Church of God and Baptist churches cooperated to make this institute possible. The writer was chairman of plans and arrangements. The Baptist, Methodist and Presbyterian pastors presided at the sessions.

Plans for this institute were laid about a year ago when we talked about the matter with Dr. Minor C. Miller, Executive Secretary of the Virginia Council of Churches, explaining to him the tremendous need for this type of service. The Spring Garden Church was centrally located and near the community high school where dinner was served to all the guests. Every available hospitality was shown by the host church.

Sponsored by the Virginia Council of Churches, the purpose of this institute was to provide an opportunity for church workers of all denominations to study principles and methods of improving the music and worship services of the local rural church.

The institute was open to choir directors, organists, pianists, choir members, ministers and church school leaders.

Contributors

We were fortunate in securing the services of Deane Edwards, Director of the Department of Worship and the Fine Arts of the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the

U. S. A. At the morning session, Mr. Edwards addressed the group on "Vital Worship Today." He also led a most helpful conference on "The Pastor and Public Worship" at the afternoon session.

Philip Trout of Roanoke, Va., led the congregational singing and demonstrated methods of making congregational singing more meaningful. The Rev. Millard Floyd was director of the institute and led the worship services. Mrs. T. J. Ingram of Lynchburg made a distinct contribution by leading a conference for church-school teachers.

It is impossible to measure the value of this institute. People who have been unfamiliar with music of this type will be quick to make use of it in their church services.

We are deeply grateful to the Virginia Council of Churches and to all others who made it possible for us to have this opportunity.

Heard on the Party Line

• Young people of Lamar, Indiana, charge will cultivate three acres of popcorn and potatoes next year as a Lord's Acre project.

Twelve hundred people attended the two services when the Salem Church, Steinauer, Nebraska, was dedicated. This beautiful open country church is well known over southeastern Nebraska. They have an unusually adequate building and a progressive congregation.

"For the last two years the pastor of the church has been taking a tape recorder around to the homes of the shut-ins on which is recorded all or portions of the regular church services; it has proven to be a wonderful innovation and helps those of the church who cannot come to feel that they are not forgotten."

"Speaking of small homesteads, our half-acre church property isn't doing too badly. We started last year with bare ground, two trees, and two bushes. As part of the landscape plan we now have 15 fruit trees, 14 grapevines, and a strawberry bed, all of which are planted right in the large expanse of new lawn. A new power mower keeps the grass cutting within the realm of possibility. Besides a small garden, slated for planting this spring are: asparagus, victorberries, raspberries, Thomas black walnut, pecan and almonds. Twelve shade and ornamental trees, together with many shrubs and flowers add beauty to our 'farm.' All of this has been dressed up with 100 feet of new sidewalk and a new 235 foot chain link fence enclosing the backyard. What a change one year can make!"

—From *The Party Line* of the Evangelical and Reformed Church

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National Catholic Rural Life Conference Resolutions

• The Board of Directors of the National Catholic Rural Life Conference made the following resolutions at the 29th Annual Convention, held at Boston, Mass.:

"We believe in the family farm as the generally preferable form of agricultural enterprise. The family farm system fosters wide distribution of ownership in productive land, encourages individual and family initiative and responsibility, and is a safeguard against collectivism. Large farm units, provided they fulfill their economic and social functions, and respect the rights of others, are not wrong in themselves. Nevertheless, American social policy should favor efficient family farms and assist them in maintaining their status against encroachments by corporate and collective forms of agriculture.

USDA

"The family farm policy review initiated by the United States Department of Agriculture performs a useful function and deserves our wholehearted support. It is not necessary to agree with all proposals of the Department of Agriculture to participate profitably in the family farm review.

"It is desirable that a national review of social policy regarding cooperatives and cooperative organizations be undertaken in the very near future. This will help qualify issues and remove many occasions of misunderstanding concerning the nature and functions of genuine cooperatives. Monopolistic trends, in so far as they exist, are just as undesirable among cooperatives as among other forms of enterprise. It is important that the value of purchasing and distribution be encouraged, since cooperatives make it possible for smaller farm enterprises to compete in the market and to strengthen their economic position.

Land Reform

"We support the efforts of our government, of various international bodies, particularly the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, and of many individuals and groups, to promote land reform throughout the world along truly democratic lines. Technical and economic aid to less developed countries should be made conditional on initiation of needed reforms in land tenure and use. Without such reforms, aid granted to these countries may benefit a few landowners and investors but will not reach the masses of underprivileged rural people.

Migration

"International migration, suitably organized, will help certain countries solve problems of serious underdevelopment, at the same time it aids other less populous countries in economic development. In this connection we call attention to the Christian principles governing use of natural resources for the benefit of the international community of men."

Farm Families

• The United States Department of Agriculture reports that only fifteen per cent of American families live on farms—but that these families produce twenty per cent of the children. Nearly half of the farm children under eighteen are in families with four or more children. Only one-fourth of the non-farm children are in families that large.

Disciples' Revival Project

• The Church Life Revival in Town and Country project of the Disciples of Christ fills the same basic need as the old-fashioned revival meeting, but does it much better. It is basically evangelistic, and is essentially the same as the Church Enlargement Crusade.

The time schedule for this project embraces twelve days, beginning on a Wednesday. The first four are directed toward the isolation and resolution of problems which have kept the project church from fulfilling its mission at home and abroad. The last eight are directed toward the ingathering of souls.

Daily Events

On the first day a two-hour conference is held with those interested in, and responsible for, the evangelistic activities of the church. The educational activities of the church are considered the second day. These are times of self-analysis and the information secured will prove most helpful.

The two-hour conference on the third day with those who are interested in and responsible for the financial and stewardship life of the church is also a period of self-analysis.

The director may find it necessary to use Saturday afternoon or evening for working out the last-minute details for the visitation campaign, which begins at noon on Sunday.

On Sunday morning the director will begin his preaching mission. This is a critical day. A dinner should be served for the workers, following which a period of instruction in the techniques of visitation evangelism should be given. The workers may then be teamed and given the names of persons on which they are to call. Provision must be made for reporting the teams who go out, so that the job may be done thoroughly and the workers may sense the accomplishments due to the concerted efforts.

Each evening of the following week and on Sunday morning an evangelistic sermon will be given. On Sunday afternoon the project director will call the leadership of the church together to evaluate the experience they have just been through, and lay final plans for future action. The last service of the project will be held Sunday evening. The director will probably want to use it to recap the significant discoveries and decisions that have been made. He can very well use the closing moments of the meeting to lead them through a high experience of dedication and thus bring the project to a satisfying close.

An Oberlin Disciple

• Our dedication to the rural church deepens with the years. To walk our town's friendly streets knowing almost everyone who passes; to lift one's eyes at dawn and see pink fire spread slowly over whited peaks; to scratch the ground, creating beauty and usefulness where once was waste; to experience the warmth of love from our people in a time of happiness; to guide youth and grown men and women into Christian rebirth; to move visibly a whole community toward a Godly society; to see concern for an anguished world grow in a church; to see more goals ahead than can ever be worked out; this is to find our life for Christ in a small town an unspeakable joy.

(Laing Sibbet, Bishop, Calif.)

—From *The Party Line* of the Evangelical and Reformed Church

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Silence

CHARLES HANSON TOWNE

I need not shout my faith. Thrice eloquent
Are quiet trees and the green listening sod;
Hushed are the stars, whose power is never spent;
The hills are mute: yet how they speak of God!

Prayer for the Church in Town and Country

• Our God, who dost direct the destinies of men and of institutions, we bring before thee our churches in town and country. We bless thee that through them many have come to know and to love thee.

We thank thee for those who established these churches, for every sacrifice and for the dedication of all those who understand and have given themselves to thy high purposes through the church.

We pray, O God, that we shall not be ashamed of the church's weaknesses and fail to see its worth. Nor, shall we gloat in a self-satisfaction which stunts its growth.

Save us, we pray, from drawing about ourselves circles of exclusiveness. But, may our hearts be warm toward all and the doors of the church open to all. Let the poor, the discouraged, the remote join with others to find thy truth and love without which none can live.

Let these churches, we humbly pray, take their stand with all churches in all places, bearing testimony to thy grace, and in building thy Kingdom throughout the earth. In Jesus' name we pray, Amen.

—Mark Rich, 1951

Purposes of This Journal

The purposes of this Journal are:

A. To encourage cooperation among rural churches.

B. To improve the administration of the local church, this to include organization of the church, finance, religious education, community relationships, and the training of lay leadership.

C. To stimulate the development of a Christian philosophy of rural life, this to embrace ethical issues in agriculture, social reconstruction, and government programs; and the content of the minister's message.

Part of Larger Program

The Journal is an important part of an enlarged "cooperative rural church program" that will encourage a national "rural church movement."

In Praise and Blame

DON F. PIELSTICK

• Five years ago the Omaha, Nebraska, *Morning World-Herald* carried the announcement of the founding of the first Salvation Army Rural Service Unit of that state. Last October, at the fifth anniversary, it was reported that 313 units were now functioning. Such progress astounded me, so I wrote to Brigadier John T. Seddon and asked for materials which would explain the Rural Service Unit and the extent of its operation.

The information arrived promptly and, after reading it, I was even more astonished than I was before. The literature stated that Wisconsin and the upper part of Michigan had 600 Rural Service Units. The department which supervises this work publishes a sixteen-page journal entitled, "Wisconsin Committeeman." It is a simple but attractive paper containing a brief description of the units and their work, and sentence reports from the 600 units.

From City to Country

The Salvation Army started its work in city slums, working on the principle of ministering where the need was greatest, and continued to meet the needs of ever-expanding urban slums. Then somebody began to keep records. They saw that "the Salvation Army's urban problems have for long years been increased and aggravated by a great inflow of rural clients—a situation which tends to grow worse, rather than better."

That statement should not have been a surprise to me, since I was well acquainted with the movement of population, but I had never before thought of such implications.

The report states further that "the organization which pledged itself to serve at the point of need finds that this rural territory . . . has been invaded by drink, disease, immorality, crime and delinquency. Millions of men, women and children struggle against poverty, go unshod, are confused and misguided, lost and unsaved . . . defects found in children at school examinations are found year after year . . . thousands of persons in rural communities have no adequate church affiliations, no hospitals, no clinics, physicians, dentists or other health and welfare services."

Here was need—need which, if not met now, would aggravate the problems in the cities. The organization felt compelled to try to adapt its ways to meet the needs of people in rural communities.

The Program

The first step is to form a local committee whose members volunteer their services. The ideal committee should be broad in representation, having on it a banker, lawyer, doctor, dentist, nurse, superintendent of schools, editor and a business man. The committee organizes a drive for funds to do charitable work. As a recognized social welfare agency, the committee's work is often written into the budget of the Community Chest, and it becomes the agency to handle the distribution of food, clothes and health services.

When a local unit is confronted with a case or a situation which is too difficult or serious for it to handle, appeal is made to the state or national unit of the Salvation Army.

Leadership for Units

Expansion, such as that in Nebraska, has created a terrific demand for leadership. This has been met only by devising a special technique:

Each of four territories in the United States has established its own training school. Young people are recruited and sent to these schools where "the curriculum is designed to equip students to meet both the spiritual and physical needs of the people with whom they come in contact. It includes Bible and Bible history, general sociology and social work, sociology applied to youth, physiology, domestic science, public speaking, composition and English, music, evangelism, etc." The Salvation Army will pay 75 per cent of the expenses for tuition and books.

Meeting the Need

Nebraska is my home state. I know scores of rural communities there and I don't have to stretch my imagination to know how such service would be received. Many young people who see the seamy side of life but have kept themselves free from its entanglements have neither the money nor the guidance to obtain the kind of education that is needed for leadership.

Most of these young people hate sordidness, but once challenged to prepare themselves to help alleviate it, they feel a sense of importance not known before. The Salvation Army's willingness to assist them comes as a gift from God.

But there are others who need assistance, too. There are those who aren't going to be leaders, but need help—physical and spiritual. There are those who do not understand the complexities of our growing social structure and need a friend who will help them to find a place where they can get the service they need so dreadfully.

What Have the Churches Done?

I grew up in the church but I can't recall that it ever helped out in one of the situations I have in mind. We were busy with preaching and prayer meetings and Sunday school lessons and revival meetings.

The people of scant education, economic and social instability were always with us. The church accepted them as part of the community life. Society didn't complain, so we took care of ourselves and performed those duties to which we had become accustomed.

The churches then were divided by sectarian differences, were led by non-resident or poorly trained pastors or by resident pastors who for various reasons were above social work except where it was demanded by members of their congregations.

Small congregations which divide the community can build neither

confidence nor organizations to do the job which needs to be done so long as each stands alone or looks to the denominational state office for help. Today, hundreds of small towns and rural communities are forming councils of churches which can give them the tools and the united front to tackle the job.

In planning for a committee to direct a Rural Service Unit, the Salvation Army lists no place for a clergyman. Why do we not consider that the united lay members of our churches can meet the needs of our communities? These needs will be met by a "welfare state" or something similar to it unless we who believe in the God of love do it.

Let's see to it that the job is done and that it is kept close to our churches in the doing. If there is to be a Salvation Army Rural Service Unit in your community, surround it with the strength, resources, fellowship and guidance of a council of churches. And if there is not to be such a unit, then let's form our council, and challenge our laity to organize themselves to perform these acts of mercy.

In-Service Training Institute

• The second interdenominational school at Rural Church Center, Green Lake, Wisconsin, will be held from April 16-May 1, 1952.

A staff of seven persons will give leadership in courses on the rural church. Ralph Williamson of Ithaca, N. Y., offers a course on "Local Church Cooperation." M. E. John of Pennsylvania State College will teach a course on "Understanding Rural People." Offered for the first time is a course on "What it Means to be a Christian Farmer (vocation)," with Shirley Greene of Merom, Ind., as teacher. Other courses will be held in drama, preaching, singing, and Bible.

Denominations are requested to provide scholarships for pastors who desire to attend. Complete information may be secured by writing Rural Church Center, Green Lake, Wisconsin.

The Rural Church in Pennsylvania*

WILLIAM G. MATHER

• The purpose of home missions is that of "spreading the gospel" to people in areas of the homeland where that gospel has not yet reached. The two most familiar kinds of distress areas calling for home missions attention today are the ones in which the resources are being rapidly exhausted or utilized in new ways so that the tide of population is rapidly ebbing, and the areas into which the discovery of some new resource, or a different utilization of an old resource, has caused locally the tide of population to rise suddenly.

Consolidation Needed

There are a very few highly localized areas in Pennsylvania where the establishment of new industrial plants is causing a rapid influx of population.

There are many more widely scattered, but also highly localized, areas in Pennsylvania where the exhaustion of the soil by unwise farming practices, the changing of farming techniques such as to make tilling of soil in certain locations no longer profitable, or the exhaustion of certain other resources such as coal, has caused a decline in population sufficient to give concern to home mission agencies with regard to the continuing support of institutionalized religion.

In these latter cases, the problem confronting home mission agencies is not so much one of church extension into new geographical areas as it is the consolidation of existing religious efforts in previously developed areas.

A look beneath the surface of the situation leads one to the conclusion that church extension is not alone a matter of the planting of new churches in hitherto unreached geographical areas; it can also be an extension of the activities of the church to hitherto unreached groups of people within the area where it already operates.

It inevitably will involve not only the reaching of new groups of people within the old community, but also the application of religious principles to new problems within the old community. In this sense of the word, it may well occur that a reduction in number of churches in an area will really prove to be a true religious advance.

Field Research

Since 1947 we have been doing at The Pennsylvania State College some yearly research in the field of the rural church in Pennsylvania. In general there does not appear to be a need for an increase in the number of rural churches in the state of Pennsylvania. There seems to be in the agricultural areas about one church to every 250 people; and as the rural area becomes more suburbanized or industrialized, the number of persons per church rises to around 350 to 400 persons of all ages.

The churches in general are small in size. Of those located in the open country, over half are of less than 100 members; of those located in small villages of under 500 population, again slightly over half are of less than 100 members; and as the population of the town increases, so the size of the church tends also to increase; yet on the whole roughly two-thirds of the rural churches of Pennsylvania regardless of location have less than 150 members.

Over half of the churches located in the open country are within three miles of a church of another denomination; one-fifth of these open country churches are within three miles of another church of the same denomination. This may be a factor which limits their growth in size.

Not only the size of the churches and Sunday schools seem to be affected by their location, but their program seems to be affected like-

* From an address delivered at the Annual Assembly of the Division of Home Missions, National Council of the Churches of Christ in the U.S.A., Buck Hill Falls, Pa., December 10, 1951.

wise; one might say that the more rural the location of the church the more meager is its program of service to the people of its community. The set of activities ordinarily associated with churches is again rather conspicuously lacking in the churches located in small villages and the open country.

The usual picture of a church is that it has a service every Sunday at the same hour; approximately two-thirds of the open country churches in our four counties in Pennsylvania did not, however, meet every Sunday at the same hour. They met either on different Sundays or at different hours on each Sunday.

Another interesting fact deals with the relationships between the rural church and the community of which it is supposedly a part. The church building is often the only building which might be considered a public building in that it has an auditorium and other rooms and facilities which might be used by community groups other than the church itself. Ninety-two per cent of the open country church buildings were reported as keeping such facilities solely to themselves.

The church building then stands in its small community closed most of the time, opened only regularly Sunday morning for Sunday school and irregularly for church worship service. It remains aloof from the general pattern of organizational life of its community.

Investigation reveals that about half of the rural pastors belong to no local community organization other than the church.

Conclusions

Certain conclusions naturally follow from the data given. One of them is that denominational home mission agencies should think twice before they increase the number of small churches scattered about the countryside, regardless of how attractive the additions to the denominational statistics may appear.

A second conclusion is that the rural church certainly has a very large unreached field of activity in the case of men and youth in its community which it has not hitherto successfully served.

A third is the very important necessity of better arrangements for training the lay leaders in the rural church organization and particularly in the rural Sunday school.

Another conclusion is that certainly the rural church should rethink its relationship to the community and to other organizations which are existing within the community.

If religion is to become effective, it must directly relate itself to every thought and every deed and every problem in the daily life of all the people in the rural community.

From Correspondence

• Among the resolutions adopted by the South Dakota Baptist State Convention, at its session in the autumn of 1951, is one which relates to the Mennonite and Hutterian groups in South Dakota. It reads:

"Whereas, we are accustomed to point with pride to our spiritual ancestors, the Anabaptists of Europe—thousands of whom did not hesitate to pay with their lives for those principles of soul liberty (freedom of conscience), believers of baptism, separation of church and state, and the authority of the Bible, which are the very essence of our religious heritage; and whereas, we have in the state of South Dakota several groups of people who are the actual descendants and present-day representatives of these European Ana-Baptists, be it resolved, that we hereby and henceforth recognize them as such, that we commend them for the courage and devotion by which they have maintained their Christian witness down the centuries, that we send them our fraternal greetings in the name of our common Lord, Jesus Christ, and that we hereby invite them to send fraternal delegates to each subsequent meeting of this Convention."

Sincerely yours,
MARK RICH

Scripture-Prayer Plan

• The Scripture-Prayer Plan, sponsored by the Religious Department of the Farmers Federation, Asheville, N. C., is being used in churches all over the country. The plan effectively employs the principle of repetition, using a verse devotionally throughout a month in contrast to the customary use of a Golden Text each Sunday.

This plan brings about a more interested and thoughtful reading of the Bible, because one is led to search eagerly for verses for prayerful use and to underscore them. It also stimulates Christian thinking in the choosing of verses to help one meet particular life-situations.

A poster on heavy paper with a Bible attractively represented at the top, and containing the words of the theme-hymn in large letters, has been printed by the Farmers Federation. Dr. Dumont Clarke, director of the Religious Department of the Farmers Federation will be glad to supply these posters for 10 cents each.

Scouting in the Rural Church

• Boys on the farm like Scouting. It fits naturally into their environment and contributes immeasurably to the enrichment of their lives. This is especially true when their Scouting experience is sponsored by the church.

The activities program of rural scouting, deeply rooted in the rich soil of spiritual nurture in the church, gives boys a satisfying experience that helps greatly to strengthen character and makes them happier members of the home and community.

Millions of boys are looking to the men of the church for leadership in this program. Here is an opportunity for developing the greatest resource of our agricultural areas, the youth of rural America!

—Published by The Protestant Committee on Scouting

Egyptian Larger Parish

FRANK R. MEASE

• The Egyptian Larger Parish is located in southeastern Illinois, in "Little Egypt," and in Gallatin, Saline and White counties.

The story is simply that ten Presbyterian churches in the small towns and open country areas of this part of the country were practically neglected, almost forgotten by their own denomination! Almost forgotten, except for collection of the annual per capita tax by the Presbytery! The entire area of six hundred square miles, touching on three counties, had only one resident Presbyterian pastor.

Ground Work

The main item of business at the first meeting of the organizing council was the creation of a working agreement, or parish council constitution. Copies of a possible constitution had been previously mailed to each of the three elected representatives in each individual church. They came to the meeting prepared to discuss and adopt a parish council constitution.

It now became the task of the member churches to elect four permanent members to the parish council. Two of these elected representatives from each church shall be elected for a two-year term, and two for a one-year term. This rotation plan would afford more laymen the opportunity of serving on the parish council.

Just recently a fifth committee has been added—the committee on Christian Education, composed of the Sunday school superintendents from each of the ten churches.

The Big Wheel

Without a functioning council there is no larger parish. The big wheel is the larger parish council. Our parish council and council committees have various functions:

The parish council, which meets regularly four times a year, is the executive body of the parish, directing and planning the over-all parish program. It conducts all necessary business and authorizes the parish treasurer to pay bills, salaries and mileage stipends, and to receive and handle all monies pertaining to parish work.

The council, through its various committees, suggests projects and activities for the parish. The council members include the elected lay representatives from each church, ordained pastors, student workers, and other authorized parish workers.

The council committees meet during the assigned periods at each council meeting. Reports are made by committee chairmen at each council meeting. The parish council may have as many committees as it believes necessary to carry on its work. Additional committees may be added as the needs of the parish require. The number of representatives on the council depends upon the number of parish council committees. Special committees are appointed for special needs.

The Egyptian Larger Parish Council now has five standing committees. These committees plan the program and activities naturally characteristic of their work. Our council meetings are presided over by the parish director.

The council, composed mostly of laymen, definitely emphasizes the importance of the laymen in parish work. Without their consecrated efforts the parish could not exist.

Evangelism

Reaching the unreached is the primary goal of any Christian church enterprise. The Egyptian Larger Parish uses the preaching mission, conducted by the ordained pastors of parish churches; organized visitation committees; special evangelistic meetings once a year in each church; and the use of outstanding religious films in connection with a week or two of special meetings in the church.

Evangelism and Stewardship are of one piece. What is evangelism without an adequate stewardship? Or vice versa? Our parish strongly emphasizes tithing for the people.

The Egyptian Larger Parish has adopted a regular budget for operating the parish. Approximately one-third of the director's salary and mileage expense comes from the National Mission funds of Presbytery and Synod. The other two-thirds is paid by the Eldorado church which the director serves as a regularly installed pastor. The other ordained and installed pastors receive their salaries directly from the local congregations which they serve. We are working toward becoming a self-supporting parish. An adequate teaching of proper stewardship practices is essential in realizing this goal.

Achievements

Many consecrated people, loyal and hopeful leaders, have made this story possible. Our weaknesses have become our strength. Six years in a larger parish is too short a time in which to measure progress. Yet the signs of progress are evident.

If there be any achievement, if there be any success, we lay them humbly at the feet of our Lord and Master. "From his words let us learn to preach; from his example let us learn to serve; in his communion let us find our strength, comfort, and peace. Whom not having seen we love, to whom we shall one day render our account."

Homestead, Oklahoma

• Folks say, in the farming community of Homestead, Oklahoma, population 30, that their Boy Scout Troop helps make their community educationally complete. Troop 87 has been operated for twelve years of successful scouting by the citizens of Homestead, and enjoys the active support of church, school, and community leadership. Practically every Homestead father and mother has had or does have an active part in the activities of the troop.

—Published by the Protestant Committee on Scouting

Rural Life Sunday

• Rural Life Sunday, the fifth after Easter, or Rogation Sunday, will be held on May 18th this year.

The Department of Town and Country Church has published an Order of Service for use by a congregation. It has been prepared for the Department by Dr. George Kerr, Director of Town and Country Church Work for the United Presbyterian Church.

Copies may be obtained from your cooperating home mission board or from the Department of Publication and Distribution, National Council of Churches of Christ in the U. S. A., 297 Fourth Avenue, New York 10, N. Y., at the following rates: Single copies, 5 cents each; 100 copies or more, $2.60 for each 100 copies. Carriage extra on quantity orders.

Auburn Summer School

• A unique venture for theological students is the Auburn Summer School Project, which has now completed its fifth year. In 1946, Auburn Theological Seminary made arrangements with the Rural Church Institute of Ithaca, N. Y. for the financial underwriting of the project and for the leadership by the Rev. Ralph L. Williamson.

The Auburn Summer School Project provides for the parish training of students from theological seminaries throughout the country. The director visits each field from three to five times, hears each student preach, observes him in every possible activity, and confers with him frequently and with his supervising pastor and the lay people in the parish where he is receiving his training. He also conducts field trips and rural church seminars while the students are in the Cornell Summer Session. The Cornell courses in sociology and agricultural economics have proven of great value.

The schedule permits a month in the churches at the beginning, six weeks in Cornell with all week-ends in the churches, and three weeks again in the parishes. This permits a unique combination of practice and study which reinforce each other.

The chief difficulty is that of scholarship funds. These have expanded from sources other than Auburn's generous funds. It should be noted that in addition to the scholarships most of the students receive a cash gift from the churches at the end of the summer. The students do not have many funds to carry back to their schools in the fall, for the scholarships usually cover only the Cornel fees and maintenance. Maintenance in the parishes is provided by the churches.

Further information about this project may be obtained from the Rev. Ralph L. Wiliamson, Rural Church Institute, Barnes Hall, Ithaca, N. Y.

Christian Rural Overseas Program

• In the season when emphasis is placed upon giving and the abundance of our own land is everywhere apparent, the Christian Rural Overseas Program offers an opportunity to share in the rehabilitation of those still living in privation and want. CROP was organized in 1947 to supplement the work of agencies concentrated in urban areas and working toward cash goals. CROP's emphasis is on commodities such as grains, soybeans, livestock, dairy products, dried fruit, raw cotton and wool.

Sponsored by the Catholic Rural Life Association, Church World Service (serving 21 Protestant denominations) and the Lutheran World Relief, this organization operates through state committees in which all major church and farm groups are represented. Commodities received are turned over to established church relief agencies of the individual donor's choice. The gifts are shipped to Europe and Asia in carload lots and distributed to orphanages, institutions for the aged and ill, refugees and the hungry, irrespective of race or creed.

CROP also sponsors "Friendship Acres." In this program, which had its precedent in Biblical times, members set aside a portion of some farm crop or livestock which at maturity is given to CROP. Details about Friendship Acres and CROP may be obtained from CROP, 308 West Washington Street, Chicago 6.

Technical Services Association

• Technical Services Association is an enterprise in which several British and American churches and the Canadian Anglicans are working with Church World Service and the Pakistan Government to bring new hope and new life to refugees and displaced persons in Pakistan.

One of T.S.A.'s projects is the new spinning wheel. Pakistan with its vast cotton fields has only one big mill. The bulk of the cotton is exported and re-imported in the form of cloth, but a good deal is hand-spun and hand-woven in the villages. As the Ghandi spinning wheel spun only one thread at a time, it was realized what a boon the multi-thread spinning wheel would be to the Pakistani villager. An eight-thread spinning wheel was invented, simple enough in design and cheap enough in cost to be practicable for the villager. The women are finding joy in companionship and accomplishment, and their meager home budgets are being supplemented.

Another T.S.A. venture to market the products of the people is the Consumer's Co-op and Credit Union.

There was a two-fold purpose in organizing the Khergam Christian Cooperative Credit Society: (1) to provide a means whereby underprivileged people could help themselves and one another to a better level of living; (2) to help to establish families and build a Christian community where none had been before.

The first working capital consisted of membership fees and a loan from a mission board. As the society grew the mission loan was paid back.

The society has made possible the development of a Christian community. Without its help the securing of land, homes, and livestock would hardly have been possible.

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Christian World Facts